

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

Thomas Jefferson said that in order for democracy to survive, we must have an educated public. Our news sources are crucial in educating us about events next door and across the ocean. There may be more pressing issues to discuss, but none of these matter if there is no longer a credible venue for informing people. News is crucial to educate the public so they can make the best choices. Despite this importance, the media are in dire condition, and what the FCC Chairman is proposing will only make matters worse.

I won't lecture you on what issues are at hand. You are well aware of those. I would like to respond to the arguments supporting these proposals supporting relaxing media ownership rules.

The FCC is suggesting that broadcast networks aren't as important as they once were with cable, the Internet, and satellite TV. Many people still don't have access to cable, and the Internet does not reach every home. To say that 50 cable channels are more diverse than three networks is short sided. The same few companies who own the networks own cable channels.

It's as though there were fewer voices, but more megaphones.

Furthermore study after study has found that most Americans get their news from television. While people watch cable, they tune in sporadically. The network news and the late night comedians have dedicated audiences. The networks are much more powerful.

Cable TV has increased diversity but barely. I spent time in Europe. Europe has much better rules regarding media content and diversity. There was more programming on those six channels than the 50+ I get with my cable at home. I have spent time in Europe where there are much better rules regarding media content and diversity. There was more programming on those six broadcast channels in France than the 50+ I get with my cable at home.

The Commission also suggests that ownership limits may no longer be necessary to promote diversity of expression in the media. The idea behind this a network will have many channels, and will want to reach as many niche audiences as possible. But, with respect to news coverage, media moguls have admitted that their news programming is suited toward advertisers. News networks are still competitive. When there are more news voices, slanted coverage is less likely to go unnoticed.

In Lafayette IN, where I live there are more radio stations per person than almost any other place in the country. Needless to say the local news coverage is lacking. Artistic Media Partners, a regional media owns four stations in the area I know of. They laid off their news teams and formed a partnership with the local television station WLFI. One news team broadcasts on TV Channel 18, 95.3 FM, 95.7 FM, 96.5 FM, 106.7 FM, and 1410 AM.

The multiple ownership has not increased diversity as people said it would. Here are three examples in my local area.

1. Purdue University owns WBAA AM920 and 101.3 FM. AM920 was news and jazz, 101.3 FM was classical music. A year ago the station manager decided to simulcast the morning and evening news on both stations, which took away 30 hours per week of original programming. The stations don't care about new programming. They want to hold on to the frequencies in order to sell them for a huge profit in the future.

2. Artistic Media Partners, who own the plurality if not the majority of Lafayette stations, have begun simulcasting 24/7. 1410AM and 95.3 FM have the same programming.

3. The same thing has happened with the oldies station WASK, 98.7 FM, 1450 AM. 98.7FM Used to be &#8220;The Wiz&#8221; which had a diverse format. WASK bought it up and now simulcasts the programming. This multiple ownership is great for wall street but horrible for state street. Further relaxation of media ownership rules will only exacerbate this problem This public comment session says a lot about media coverage. No mainstream media source told me about the media ownership rules. I found out from a friend who is works with FAIR. On their program Counterspin they asked the rhetorical question why is the public the last to know when it comes to media issues. The fact is that corporate interests are rarely questioned when there is not diversity in the media..